

Appl. No. 10/633,996

Amdt. dated 12/19/05

Reply to Office action of September 19, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Initially, it is noted that on the Office Action Summary, items 12, 12a and 1 have not been checked. However, a Claim for Priority and a certified copy of German Application 102 35 454.5 dated August 2, 2002 was filed on September 22, 2003. Applicants would appreciate acknowledgement of receipt of Applicants' Claim for Priority and certified copy of the priority document supporting the claim for priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119.

Claims 1-4, 6-13 and 15-17 remain in the application and are subject to examination. Claims 1, 6, 8 and 15 have been amended. Claims 5 and 14 have been canceled.

In "Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102", item 4 pages 2-3 of the above-identified Office Action, claims 1-3, 14 and 16 have been rejected as being fully anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,651,202 to Phan under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e).

In "Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103", item 6 on pages 3-4 of the Office Action, claims 1-4, 14 and 16 have been rejected as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,321,320 to Fleischman et al. under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

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The rejections have been noted and the claims have been amended in an effort to even more clearly define the invention of the instant application.

Applicants appreciatively acknowledge the Examiner's statement item 7 on page 4 of the Office Action, claims 5-13, 15 and 17 "would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims."

Therefore, the subject matter of claim 5 has been added to claim 1 while canceling claim 5. Claim 1 should now be allowable. Claims 6 and 8 have been amended to be consistent with the amendment to claim 1 and therefore claims 2-4, 6-13 and 16-17 are all now ultimately dependent on claim 1 and should be allowable as well. Claim 15 has been amended to include the subject matter of original claims 1 and 14 while canceling claim 14. Therefore, claim 15 should now be allowable as well.

It is accordingly believed to be clear that none of the references, whether taken alone or in any combination, either show or suggest the features of claims 1 and 15. Claims 1 and 15 are, therefore, believed to be patentable over the

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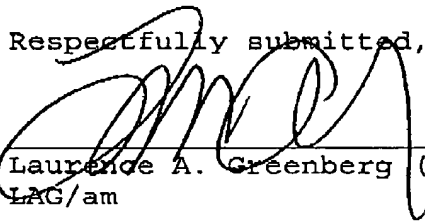
art. The dependent claims are also believed to be patentable because they all are ultimately dependent on claims 1 or 15.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-4, 6-13 and 15-17 are solicited.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, counsel would appreciate receiving a telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out.

If an extension of time is required, petition for extension is herewith made. Any extension fee associated therewith should be charged to the Deposit Account of Lerner and Greenberg, P.A., No. 12-1099. Please charge any other fees that might be due with respect to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to Deposit Account No. 12-1099 of Lerner and Greenberg, P.A..

Respectfully submitted,


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LAG/am

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